



State Senator Jud Gilbert

SERVING THE 25TH DISTRICT – LAPEER & ST. CLAIR COUNTIES

*Breaking news from Senator Gilbert's Office
A Legislative Bulletin for Residents of the 25th District*

GILBERT GAZETTE

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Gilbert's Resolution urges Congress to count only legal citizens for congressional seat apportionment

A Senate Resolution has been introduced urging the United States Congress to adopt and transmit to the states a constitutional amendment that would ensure that congressional seat apportionment is based on the census count of legal citizens.

Jud Gilbert introduced Senate Resolution 105, in response to the impact that illegal immigrants are having on distribution of congressional seats. Seats are apportioned based on each state's population, including both legal and non-legal residents. In 2000, the high presence of non-citizens in states such as Florida, Texas and California caused Michigan and other Midwestern states to lose seats to those states with larger populations.

"My Colleagues and I are concerned that states such as Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky will continue to lose even more congressional seats, not because our populations are declining, but because other states are being inundated with illegal immigrants," Gilbert said. "These illegal citizens cannot vote yet they are affecting the representation of legal citizens around the country. In California for example, in the 31st Congressional District, only 60 percent of the 'persons' counted by the census were listed as legal citizens."

Senators hear details on bills to protect children from sexual predators

Testimony was heard recently in the Senate Judiciary Committee on legislation designed to give judges and law enforcement officials a powerful new weapon to protect children from sexual predators. The legislation will give prosecutors the ability to charge and judges the option of sentencing individuals convicted of sex with children to life in prison with no chance of parole.

If signed into law, Senate Bill 709, along with two companion bills, will make it possible for an individual convicted of criminal sexual conduct in the first degree to serve a life sentence without a chance of parole if their victim was under the age of 13. The proposal also requires one of the following circumstances be present: infliction of injury, use of a weapon, force or coercion, or the perpetrator held a position of authority.

Senate committee offers own version of high school graduation-requirements plan

The Senate-backed bipartisan plan for statewide high-school graduation requirements has won the backing of the full Senate Chamber. The plan makes Michigan a national leader in having rigorous high school graduation requirements.

Highlights of the Senate plan, which would go into effect for students entering ninth grade in 2007, include:

- Four credits of English
- Four math credits, including geometry, and Algebra I and II.
 - Senate plan allows students to take Algebra II over two years.
- Three science credits.
- Three social science credits.
- Two foreign-language credits that can be completed in any grade.
- One health and physical-education credit.
- One visual, performing or applied arts credit.
- One course or online learning experience, or an online experience that is integrated into high-school curriculum.

The Senate Education Committee held nine hearings across the state to seek input from parents, educators and others. Existing law requires just a semester of civics class before graduation and leaves other standards to local boards. After a vote 35-0 from the Senate the legislation is heading over to the house with the expectation of it passing by the end of May 2006.

Deployed National Guard and reserve members could see a temporary modification in child-support payments

National Guard and reserve members called to military duty could see a temporary modification in child-support payments with legislation introduced recently in the Michigan Senate.

Senate Bill 1128 would qualify military deployment as a “change in circumstance” and allow a National Guard or reserve member to pay an adjusted amount in child-support payments if the military member experiences a decrease in compensation.

At present, child-support payments may only be modified due to a “change in circumstance,” and military deployment does not qualify as a change in circumstance. In order for the military member to receive a temporary child-support payment adjustment he or she must provide proof of deployment date and compensation rate. Within 30 days of discharge from active duty, the military member would be required to notify the Friend of the Court to reinstate the previous amount paid in child support.